

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' 4-H CLUB WORK

1933

Madge J. Reese
Field Agent, Western States

Progress Noted in 1933

Boys' and girls' 4-H club work met quickly and effectively the test of emergency in 1933 by adjusting the program to take care of the present-day needs of farm living and the young people on the farms. Growth in the emergency can be claimed for 4-H club work, as there has been the normal increase in the extension of its benefits and influence that is expected each year. The improvement in quality of work done and the satisfactory results also can be given creditable recognition.

The total enrollment in the 4-H clubs for 1933 was 921,965, including 378,143 boys and 543,822 girls. The number of 4-H clubs was 57,400 for the 48 States, Alaska, and Hawaii. For the first time in the history of 4-H club work, the enrollment decreased from that of the preceding year. The decrease in 1933 was 0.40 percent, a very negligible decrease considering the reasons for it, which can be listed as follows:

- (1) Suspension of the regular Extension Service work in some counties because of lack of funds.
- (2) Decrease in number of regular State and county extension workers.
- (3) The necessary and tremendous responsibilities placed upon the county extension agents in conducting the agricultural adjustment program and other emergency measures made it impossible for the usual amount of time to be given to 4-H club work, particularly in the fall months at the time of the completion of most club projects for the year. The reports show that 665,854 boys and girls completed projects. The percentage of enrollment completing in 1933 was 72.22.
- (4) The State extension specialists, many of them likewise occupied with the agricultural adjustment work, gave less time to 4-H club field work.

This curtailment in time devoted to 4-H club work by extension forces is nothing less than can be expected in any emergency period. Nevertheless the results are satisfactory and can be attributed largely to the following:

DISTRIBUTION: A copy of this circular has been sent to each extension director, State leader in county agricultural, home demonstration, and 4-H club work; extension specialist; agricultural-college library, and experiment-station library.

(1) Excellent supervision was maintained in spite of slight decrease in supervisory personnel.

(2) There was greater stability in county and community organization as a result of steady development over a period of years.

(3) Local leadership rallied to its opportunity in assuming more responsibility.

(4) The adjustment of the program met the immediate economic needs. At the same time activities of long-time development were not discontinued. Many of the projects had a "live-at-home" phase. Increased emphasis was given to gardens, food preservation and storage, poultry, and pork production for home consumption. The resourcefulness of extension leaders and agents substituted worth-while projects in place of those that required more initial finance on the part of club boys and girls than was possible or practicable during emergency conditions. When a club boy who was interested in livestock was not able to make the necessary cash outlay for starting in livestock club work, he might be encouraged to join a crop club and learn to produce the feed for the particular livestock at much less cash outlay and thereby be better prepared for livestock work in another year.

(5) Added emphasis was given to activities which helped to maintain cheerfulness and contentment and uphold family morale as well as to give educational training to boys and girls. These activities were: Improvements in house furnishing at slight or no cash cost; making the farm-home surroundings attractive; handicraft; appreciation of good music, pictures, and books; pageantry and plays for the community; and organized recreation for home and community.

(6) Greater use was made of visual-instruction devices such as posters, charts, lantern slides, film strips, and motion pictures as methods of presentation in 4-H club work. The radio had a large part in gaining and holding public interest and support. An increased number of 4-H radio club programs were presented over local broadcasting stations in the States during 1933. The press gave its usual generous support to 4-H club work, and local 4-H news reporting by club members and local leaders is bringing desired results.

(7) Programs to meet the interests and needs especially of the advanced groups of club members between the ages of 16 and 20 have been formulated and put into effect in 44 States and Hawaii in the past 3 or 4 years. Such programs gained impetus during 1933. Already there is indication that the special projects for the senior groups are increasing the tenure of 4-H club membership.

Supervision and Organization

State supervision itself was systematically and economically organized in 1933. A well-organized plan of work for State supervisors is exemplified by the Michigan plan:

- (1) Assisting county extension agents to determine extension programs - State, county, community, enterprise, etc.

- (a) Obtaining and analyzing factual data on situations and problems.
 - (b) Use of outlook and other economic data.
 - (c) Assistance of committeemen in program making.
 - (d) Economic adjustment and long-time programs.
 - (e) Coordination of programs of specialists and agents.
- (2) Assistance given agents in planning work.
- (a) Selection of goals.
 - (b) Choice of means and agencies.
 - (c) Use of local leaders.
 - (d) Methods of evaluating and checking results.
- (3) Help rendered in measuring progress and results of extension teaching.
- (a) Record systems.
 - (b) Surveys and reports on adoption of improved practices recommended in program of work.
 - (c) Records of other activities.
 - (d) Evaluation of results recorded.
 - (e) Reports.
- (4) Assistance given county extension agents in more efficient use of means and agencies.
- (a) Circular letters.
 - (b) News service.
 - (c) Farm and home visits.
 - (d) Office calls.
 - (e) Meetings, including tours.
 - (f) Demonstrations.
 - (g) Bulletins.
 - (h) Local leaders.
 - (i) Educational exhibits.
- (5) Studies, other than analyses of reports, conducted to determine more effective methods of extension organization and teaching.

Each State has some type of county organization representing the leadership of 4-H club work of the different communities. These county organizations increased during 1933. They are known as 4-H county councils, 4-H county executive committees, or 4-H county advisory committees. These county organizations meet at regular intervals. Although personal funds for travel were limited during 1933, local leaders often came 40 and 50 miles to attend county meetings. County extension agents received valuable assistance in these councils, in program determination, in the planning of special activities like achievement-day programs, fair exhibits, and in checking upon results of club activities in the communities.

Volunteer Local Leadership Assumes Responsibility

The increasing number of local volunteer leaders giving more time to 4-H club work each year is of the greatest significance. The number of adult leaders who gave time and effort without financial remuneration to 4-H club

activities totaled 70,174. In addition 34,329 advanced club members assisted as local leaders. These leaders testify that they feel repaid because of the training and experience gained, the opportunity for association with extension workers, and the satisfaction that comes in helping young people.

The tenure of local leaders in Montana in 1933 is noteworthy; 50 percent were serving their first year, 28 percent second year, 11 percent third year, 6 percent fourth year, and 5 percent 5 years or more. Montana also reports that 17 percent of its local leaders are former 4-H club members.

Training was given in organization and general activities largely at county 4-H council meetings, but information and technic relating to 4-H club projects were given at special meetings conducted by extension agents and specialists.

The Program Meets the Need

The activities of 4-H club members in 1933 often enabled them to give definite financial aid toward family living. A fat baby beef, three or four sheep, the products of a garden, home-canned fruits and vegetables, clothing and furnishings remodeled or made from inexpensive materials, have been significant items in increasing the family income or reducing expenses.

A project especially designed to meet an economic condition is the "pig for pork" project in the State of Washington. The club member obtains one weanling pig in the spring and feeds it according to an economic plan. In the fall a butchering demonstration is given, followed by demonstrations in cutting up, in curing, and in the utilization of by-products.

In Virginia a systematic plan was carried out whereby every girls' 4-H club devoted two meetings to food-preservation demonstrations. Each club girl was encouraged to help her family in making a canning budget and to assist with the canning. Records show that 2,531 girls canned by budgets and 3,717 reported they cooperated in the family "live-at-home" program. Thirty-nine Virginia counties reported that club girls canned products valued at \$67,895. The garden club work was closely associated with the food-preservation program. The home garden club enrollment for the whole country was 177,386, an increase of 7,032 over 1932. Also the total enrollment of 176,942 in food preservation was an increase of 6,114 over 1932.

In Maryland 823 boys produced \$20,000 worth of food on 323 acres of home gardens. Maine considers the 46 percent increase in canning-club enrollment and the 17 percent increase in garden clubs an outstanding accomplishment of 1933, because it indicates that club work is helping to solve some of the economic problems of present-day living. Connecticut reports that poultry club work is its best all-round agricultural project; the receipts were nearly \$50,000 above cost to 700 poultry club members. Poultry club enrollment increased by 1,295 in 1933, with an enrollment of 104,334 for the entire country.

Club members, both boys and girls, showed considerable interest in improving the farm-home surroundings. "Fix it" was a motto for some of the home-improvement clubs in making small repairs about the place. Special attention was given to open lawns, the use of native shrubbery, foundation plantings, and planting to a plan.

There were 4,309 4-H garden club girls in Florida, and many of them planted perennials as part of the home garden program. As part of the home garden and perennial program, counties adopted a county flower to be grown by all club members. It is believed that the general interest in the growing of the flowers and the county flower shows had much to do with the fact that 2,505 Florida club girls carried definite demonstrations in improving the home grounds during the year.

The clothing project continues with the largest enrollment of all club projects. The enrollment of 325,012 in 1933 showed an increase of 4,086 over that of 1932. The program was designed as usual to meet the needs, and thrift in clothing was the keynote. Girls were impressed with what they could do to help with clothing problems of the family by such economical practices as exchanging patterns, dyeing and renovating garments, and making hats. Thrift exhibits have been used most advantageously. Club girls have studied selection of the most practical materials, most suitable colors, combination of materials, patterns and how to use them. At the present time the clothing budget is often largely devoted to shoes. It is therefore important that the money be spent wisely for satisfactory shoes. The shoe-selection program continued throughout the 4-H clothing club work in California, 4,096 pairs of shoes which met club requirements having been selected and worn by club members in 1933.

Livestock clubs decreased in enrollment or remained about the same. The baby-beef enrollment, however, had an increase of 2,743 members, making the total enrollment 23,006. A decrease in the enrollment in baby beef clubs in the Western States is attributed to the great price reduction club members suffered in 1932. Some of the mid-Western States, however, had increased enrollment. Dairy clubs, with an enrollment of 49,076, showed a decrease of 2,157 from the enrollment in 1932. The enrollment in swine clubs stayed practically the same, with 74,627; the corn club enrollment decreased to 57,801; and the horse club had a small increase. The sheep enrollment in 1933 was 13,326, an increase of 300.

More Recent Program Features

In addition to the agricultural and homemaking projects, other opportunities for self-expression have been provided by interesting features in the 4-H club program. The year 1933 shows marked progress in such activities, which bring culture, wholesome recreation, and happiness into everyday life.

Organized recreation has become an established part of the 4-H club program. In a number of counties in Oregon and California, community recreational leaders met once each month to plan recreational features for the 4-H clubs and for all communities. Local recreational leaders in Juab County, Utah, conducted 11 recreational programs with an attendance of 12,000 in 1933. One hundred new games, stunts, and dances were taught.

The production of 1-act plays is increasing in popularity. Institutes have been held in a large number of States in the past 3 or 4 years where extension agents and local leaders were given instruction by professionals in rules for acting, make-up, color for stages and color psychology, costuming, inexpensive stage lighting, and setting, and selection of plays suitable for

production in the communities. Most creditable results have come from this training. Farm people have little money for commercial entertainment these days but are learning to be resourceful in creating their own entertainment.

In Wisconsin every club is encouraged to put on a 1-act play, and several hundred did so. A State tournament was held during State Club Week at the agricultural college. Fourteen counties took part in the State tournament. One of the judges spoke as a critic to add to the educational phase of the drama work.

The music-appreciation work with club girls in Iowa has been far-reaching. At the end of this feature in 1933, a State music-appreciation contest was held, in which 430 girls representing 86 counties participated. Chorus singing is receiving attention, and 57 counties were represented by 173 voices in the chorus at the 4-H girls' State convention.

Creative art in useful handicraft was encouraged in some States, not always as a regular project but as an added interest to increase the contentment of boys and girls on the farms and in villages. In Massachusetts handicraft was established in clubs where the schools had discontinued manual training. Ways and means whereby handicraft might help out with family incomes were considered, and county handicraft contests were conducted. The enrollment in handicraft clubs for the whole country was 45,915, an increase of 3,805 over 1932. Handicraft clubs working with metals, especially copper, are proving successful with the Indian club boys in Alaska.

Other attractive club features which added interest and provided training for club members were bird protection, collection hobbies, nature hikes in connection with forestry clubs or at the 4-H club camps, appreciation of good pictures, and magazine and book circles.

Not a new feature but one that remains very popular is the county 4-H club camp. The camp stimulates interest and achievement and serves as an award for hard work in the more serious projects. As a recreational feature it ranks very high. The attendance at 1,770 club camps was 169,589.

Advanced 4-H Club Work With Young Men and Women

An effort is being made to hold club members between the ages of 16 and 20 a longer period of time. Serious thought is being given to the development of projects that make an appeal to this group. It means the enlarging of projects to include larger units that have economic value of some consequence, and the introduction of new features which meet the social needs of young men and women on the farms. Also leadership among the older group is more generally being recognized and put to work on activities needed by the younger group. This influences the older group in staying in club work longer.

The Territory of Hawaii has worked out a system which is worthy of our reviewing. It recognized this problem as a separate one from either boys' and girls' club work or adult demonstration work from the very beginning of its extension work and has provided specific leadership for it. Hawaii divides its boys' and girls' club work into junior and senior 4-H clubs and its adult work into junior and senior farm and home demonstration clubs,

respectively. The age limits are not arbitrary or fixed; that is, a young man or woman of about 16 to 20 has the option of joining either a senior 4-H club or a junior farm or home demonstration club. Similarly, those young men and women about 20 - and beyond - may unite with either a junior or senior farm or home demonstration club. This plan is flexible and adapts itself to the ability, maturity, and inclination of the young people involved. It is working satisfactorily.

Conclusion

There is every cause for satisfaction in the results of 4-H club work for the past year. Too much significance should not be attached to the slight decrease in enrollment; that is an inevitable incident to meeting a great national emergency. It has made possible an advance that under normal conditions might have been years in developing. There has been a necessarily larger dependence on trained local leadership, and results have demonstrated that this dependence is well placed. In individual counties an increased enrollment and a higher percentage of completions of projects have been obtained, with greatly reduced attention by the county extension agents. More attention has been given to the organization of county club councils and the use of senior club members as assistant leaders. In many instances these new organizations and additional leaders have functioned most helpfully. This is all to the good and advancement of 4-H club work. It often happens that weakness results from non-use quite as much as from a lack of potential power. New occasions teach new duties. After all, the end product in all extension work is to make rural people more self-reliant and resourceful. The older club members are participating in the problems of the agricultural adjustment and farm and home record-keeping as never before. They are learning the value and even the necessity of cooperation and long-time planning. There are other criteria of advancement besides mere increased enrollment, though that, too, may come in larger volume than now contemplated as we learn to use the lessons of adversity.

1-762
Extension Service Circular 207

December 1934

Boys' and Girls' 4-H Club Work, 1933

Madge J. Reese

RECEIVED
DEC 14 1934
EXTENSION SERVICE FILE



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Extension Service C. W. WARBURTON *Director*
Division of Cooperative Extension C. B. SMITH *Chief*
Washington, D.C.